

VOLUME 39 NUMBER 1 PAGES 1-52 JANUARY - MARCH 2005

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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Publications Mail Registration # 09798

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Publication Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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Michael Murphy

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

Membership Fees: Individual (yearly) \$28 Sustaining (yearly) \$30
Family (yearly) \$30 Life (one payment) \$500

Benefactor \$500 Subscriptions to Trail & Landscape:
(libraries and institutions): \$28 per year (volume)

Postage for U.S. and other foreign countries please add \$5

Single copies of recent issues: \$6 each postpaid

Index to Vols. 1 - 20: \$10 postpaid; to Vols. 21-25 \$5 postpaid.

Membership application, correspondence:

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Published by

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2

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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

Evelyne Boucher
Carolyn Cahill & family
Julia Cipriani
Ian Clark
Marti Farkas & family
Vadim & Svetlana Fotinov
Colin Freebury
Mark Gawn & family
Marilyn Glenn
Marlene Harris & family
Florence Hill
Kathryn Laporte
Julian Murray & family
Jessie Naisby
Marlene Nash
Enoch Padolsky
Kent Phillips
Joanne Poole
Stephen Rolfe & family
Vivien Rolland-Commarmot
Helen Scott
Louise & Richard Seaby
Bill Stewart & family
Hilda & Colin Wooles

Other Areas

Eugene Jankowski Mississauga ON
Michael & Colleen Boudreau Brockville ON
Michael Patrikeev Sudbury ON
Eileen Thurston Deep River ON

Dave Smythe
Chair, Membership Committee
December 2004

Conservation Matters

Stan Rosenbaum

As always, the number of environmental issues that the Conservation Committee should be working on is far greater than the few we actually take on. Here I outline what the committee (and others) did about some of them.

5309 Bank Street

The first Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was deficient, and the City ordered a second EIS. While the second identified a larger number of significant species, again it suggested that protection can be achieved by relocating specimens, provided no evidence that this would be successful, and gave no provision for subsequent monitoring and management. The City also ordered a peer review of the second EIS which raised additional questions. In August, we sent additional letters to the City and to the Aggregate Resources Inspector of the Ministry of Natural Resources. We again opposed the re-zoning, pointing out that the proposed relocation of rare species typically does not work because their habitat requirements are not only stringent, but generally unknown. The City has not reached a decision on the re-zoning. For more information, check the OFNC web pages at <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation/blank/index.php>.

Alfred Bog

Frank Pope chaired the 29th meeting of the Alfred Bog Committee on October 18. At the last meeting, dissenters to the landowners agreement reached a resolution with the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, and the OMB appeal was abandoned. There will be no resumption of peat extraction from the bog. Adjacent areas are also protected and the remaining peat extractors will receive compensation. This marks a sharp turn for the better in what has been a long road that Frank has pursued for over 20 years.

Ontario Planning Reform

Feeling that the new Ontario Government should receive our best advice as early as possible on their declared intention to reform the planning process, we submitted our brief (see the previous *T&L* for further details) before the end of July, a month before the deadline. To keep up the momentum, we sent followup letters to the Premier and Ministers of Municipal Affairs, Natural Resources, Environment, and Agriculture. We received thoughtful replies from all of them. An assistant to the

Minister of the Environment also suggested that we express our concerns about the environmental assessment process to a special Environmental Assessment Review Panel, which was set up in September and is due to report by year-end. One of our comments was “. . . the EA process. . . ultimately decides whether natural heritage and greenspace lands are protected or destroyed.” A full copy of the brief is at: <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservation,ea-comments.php>.

Larose Forest

The Friends of Larose Forest are exploring the possibility of establishing an interpretive centre to help educate the public about the natural values and recreational potential of the forest. As of this writing, there is still no decision announced by the OMB on the appeal opposing development in Larose Forest.

Marlborough Forest Citizens' Group

A report from Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee (OFGAC) was circulated to Conservation Committee members about the first meeting of the Marlborough Forest Citizens' Group. Our committee is not directly involved in this issue, but is being informed through OFGAC and others.

Carp Ridge Proposed Development

This proposed subdivision, to be built on Canadian shield, was previously severed from adjacent farm land. A group of local residents and others are opposing the development, but certain levels of approval were granted by West Carleton Township in 1991, long before amalgamation with the City of Ottawa. Proposals to preserve all the Carp Ridge were defeated in the early 1980s by an OMB ruling that said the property owners would have to be compensated at market value if re-zoned. For more information, go to the Carp Ridge Society website at: <http://www.carpridge.ca>.

You can check out the OFNC web pages for monthly summaries and more information about many of these issues at <http://www.ofnc.ca/conservate.htm>.

Alfred Bog - Success

Frank Pope

It was a forlorn hope in 1985 when Charles Sauriol and I convened a meeting of concerned people about the destruction of Alfred Bog, but we have succeeded. At the 29th meeting of the Alfred Bog Committee we were informed that the last appeal of that part of the Prescott-Russell Official Plan pertaining to Alfred bog had been withdrawn, the hearing of the Ontario Municipal Board which had been in mediation for years was now terminated, and the boundary and wetland designation for the bog were now official. On October 26, 2004 the County Council passed the Alfred Bog Protection By-Law. Alfred Bog has now been protected from peat extraction, logging or drainage.

Although the significance of the bog as a natural area was known in 1980, it has taken this long to bring enough people on side making it possible to save the bog. In the meantime, the wetland boundary has shrunk and the Moose Creek bog has been lost. Not to downgrade a great accomplishment, but the Alfred Bog example illustrates how difficult it is to influence long held attitudes about wetlands. I could not begin to list the organisations and people who have contributed to our success. Involved were all levels of government (Canada, Ontario, Prescott-Russell, Nation, Alfred-Plantagenet), the Nature Conservancy of Canada, South Nation Conservation, Vankleek Hill and Ottawa Naturalists Clubs, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Alfred College, private industry and many, many individuals who gave time, talent and money. It is a heart warming accomplishment.

To all the members of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club who have supported the cause over the years, I thank you very much. I am proud to be among you.

Biology students confirm displacement of native crayfish at Chaffey's Lock, Lake Opinicon

Paul Catling and Brenda Kostiuk

In an assessment of crayfish diversity in the Mixedwood Plains Ecozone, Barr (1996) noted that “the two most evident gaps in knowledge about crayfish biodiversity were basic faunal knowledge of the northeastern part of the zone and knowledge of the spread and impact of introduced *Orconectes* species, the Rusty Crayfish (*O. rusticus*), and the Obscure Crayfish (*O. obscurus*) in the central part of the zone.” Lake Opinicon, north of Kingston, is within this region. It is situated near the boundary of the ecozone (in ecoregion 133, the Frontenac axis). During a recent field biology course at the Queen’s University Biology Station on Lake Opinicon near Chaffey’s Lock, students from several universities participated in a local survey of crayfish diversity. The objective was to determine the extent to which two introduced species had displaced three native species.

In 1964, three native species, the Calico Crayfish (*Orconectes immunis*), the Virile Crayfish (*Orconectes virilis*) and Northern Clearwater Crayfish (*Orconectes propinquus*) had been collected in Lake Opinicon near the lock. Voucher specimens for these occurrences are in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum. The two introduced species, *O. rusticus* and *O. obscurus*, had not been recorded from the Chaffey’s Lock area and were considered rare in the province at the time (Crocker and Barr 1968). These two alien species were thought to have been introduced by fisherman in bait buckets and established locally when they escaped or were released. The Rusty Crayfish has spread through a large portion of Ontario and surrounding regions, but more seriously it appears to have replaced the native crayfishes in many areas and in some cases has reduced overall biodiversity (e.g., Barr 1996; Berrill 1978; Capelli 1982; DiDonato and Lodge 1993; Maude 1988, Momot 1992; Momot *et al.* 1988; Schueler 1989, 2002; Taylor and Redmer 1996).

During the survey, over 100 crayfish were captured in four parts of Lake Opinicon, and most were clearly *O. rusticus*. Fifty crayfish were collected from the lock area in a variety of habitats, mostly rocky places in water up to 2 m deep with or without a strong current. The lock area produced 35 *O. rusticus* and 15 *O. propinquus*.

Many of the *O. propinquus*, however, appeared to be hybrids of a cross involving *O. rusticus*. The central ridge of the rostrum was less developed than in *O. propinquus* from the places where *O. rusticus* does not occur (such as parts of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers), and other morphological features (copulatory stylets etc) had an intermediate expression.

In rocky areas in Deadlock Bay and at Rock Lake Outlet we also found *O. rusticus* and *O. propinquus*. One specimen of the *O. immunis* was collected at the biology station. Since 100 individuals are a reasonably good sample there is good evidence for a major shift from native species to an introduced crayfish in the Chaffey's Lock area since the 1960s.

Since it was created as part of the Rideau Canal system, there have been many changes in Lake Opinicon. The invasion of the submerged aquatic plant, Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) in the 1970s choked the lake preventing boating and swimming, and lead to major fish kills and polluted water (partly a consequence of attempts to control the invading plant with chemicals). By the 1980s the milfoil was in decline and, although still present, it is no longer a major problem. Zebra mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) invaded about 1999 and were prominent by 2002. Swimmers cut their feet badly on the introduced mussels; native mussels declined and certain macrophytes apparently increased. Many aquatic insects may also have declined as a result of the mussels. The exact timing of invasion of the Rusty Crayfish is unknown, except that it was after 1964. Although Rusty Crayfish reduce populations of alien Zebra Mussels and alien plants such as Eurasian Watermilfoil (Perry *et al.* 1997, 2000), they may not function in this capacity better than the native species they are displacing. One recent study found Rusty Crayfish covered with up to 431 zebra mussels up to 12 mm long (Brazner and Jensen 2000) and concluded that in some cases the introduced mussels could be detrimental to the introduced crayfish!

The ability of the alien crayfish to displace native species involves a combination of characteristics including larger size, more aggressive behaviour, more rapid reproduction, faster development (Lodge *et al.* 1985, Olsen *et al.* 1991), reproductive domination and hybridization (Berrill 1985, Capelli and Capelli 1980, DiDonato and Lodge 1993, Hamr 1997, Gunderson 1998, Momot *et al.* 1988, Perry *et al.* 2001; Schueler 1989, 2002). Recently Perry *et al.* (2001) provided the first genetic documentation for hybridization between alien *O. rusticus* and native *O. propinquus* based on studies in Wisconsin. Their work suggested that genetic mechanisms play a role in the extirpation of *O. propinquus* by *O. rusticus*. The impact of introduced crayfish on other aquatic organisms is poorly documented but there is some evidence that the Rusty Crayfishes reduce invertebrate species diversity (Lodge and Lorman 1987; Perry *et al.* 1997).



Fig. 1 *Orconectes rusticus* from Chaffey's Lock showing the characteristic black band just behind the tip of the fingers of the large claws. Photo: P. M. Catling 17 Aug. 2004.

Until it began to expand 50 years ago, the Rusty Crayfish is believed to have had a relatively small midwestern range. It was confined to the Ohio River basin in Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana and Illinois. Its range has extended north to northwestern Ontario and Maine, and west to New Mexico (Crocker and Barr 1968).

Most of the specimens captured during the survey around Chaffey's Lock were readily identified. The Rusty Crayfish (*O. rusticus*) usually has distinctive dark black bands near the tips of the claws (Figure 1) and reddish-orange (rusty) markings on the sides of the carapace and on the abdomen (Figure 2). The specimens determined as *O. propinquus* were initially thought to be referable to *O. obscurus* but lacked the pronounced shoulder on the first pleopod as well as possessing other features of *O. propinquus*. The Virile Crayfish (*O. virilis*) has a distinctive narrow separation between the sides of the carapace and prominent white bumps on the

claws were absent.



Fig. 2 *Orconectes rusticus* from Chaffey's Lock showing characteristic dark markings (reddish-brown) on the side of the carapace and on the abdomen. Photo: P. M. Catling 17 Aug. 2004.

Despite some hybridization, crayfish are not too difficult to identify and field biologists can gather useful information on population trends. This contributes to the larger picture of environmental change. Interestingly, publications of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club have played an important role in providing information and documenting the spread of introduced crayfishes. Five of the articles listed below are in OFNC publications.

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Some useful web sites:

Rusty Crayfish

<http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/exotics/rusty.html>

<http://www.issg.org/database/species/ecology.asp?si=217&fr=1&sts=sss>

<http://crayfish.byu.edu/Keys/orconectes.htm>

Mixedwood Plains Ecozone

(<http://sis.agr.gc.ca/cansis/intro.html>)

Origins and History of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Frank Pope

This is the title of a 40 page article by Dan Brunton which was published in Volume 118 Number 1 of The Canadian Field-Naturalist in recognition of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club in 1879.

This issue will have been released by the time you read this notice. Members of the Club who do not receive The Canadian Field-Naturalist may get a free copy by contacting the Club through the Club telephone number, the website, the host of a Monthly Meeting or a member of the OFNC Council.

It is a good read. Dan captures the spirit of the times and the evolution of the Club over the past 125 years and also explores the earlier, pre-Confederation origins of the Ottawa naturalists' community.

The 2005 Dragonfly Society of the Americas meeting to be hosted in Ontario

Paul Catling, Colin Jones and Brenda Kostiuk

Dragonflies are rapidly gaining importance as a method of evaluating impacts of industrial and agricultural practices. They are readily monitored as indicators of the general status of biodiversity. They consume pest insects including biting flies that carry disease and various problematic insects that feed on crops. They also have a major impact on ecosystems as both predators and prey and some endangered species are dependent upon them. Over the past few years they have been found to be very important as research subjects in expanding knowledge of landscape ecology and evolution. They have also become remarkably popular with the general public.

With great pleasure, we would like to announce that the annual Dragonfly Society of the Americas (DSA) meeting will be held in Arnprior, Ontario on 8-12 July 2005. This meeting draws professional and amateur Odonatologists from across North America. It promises to be an excellent opportunity to meet many of the leading North American experts and to visit some outstanding areas in the Ottawa valley in search of Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies).

Plans for the meeting:

Attendees will arrive and register the evening of 8 July and depart the morning of 12 July. Two days will be devoted to field trips while another day will be devoted to both popular and scientific presentations and workshops. Although the field trips have not yet been completely arranged, we will likely visit the Petawawa River, the Mississippi River, White Lake Fen, Beachburg Pools, and Westmeath Bog as well as small woodland springs and lake shores. Insect repellent, bug jackets, sun screen, lunch, drinks, appropriate clothing and extra (dry) clothes will be needed on field days, as well as cameras, binoculars and nets. Within 80 kilometres of Arnprior, 110 of the 169 Ontario species of dragonflies and damselflies have been recorded. Species often associated with rivers such as *Gomphus fraternus* (Midland Clubtail), *Gomphus notatus* (Elusive Clubtail) and *Gomphus vastus* (Cobra Clubtail) are present on the Ottawa River as is the dusk-flying *Neurocordulia yamaskanensis* (Stygian Shadowdragon). Several dragonflies with rather restricted North American distributions are present in the area including *Arigomphus cornutus* (Horned

Clubtail), *Arigomphus furcifer* (Lilypad Clubtail), *Gomphus borealis* (Beaverpond Clubtail), *Neurocordulia michaeli* (Broad-tailed Shadowdragon), *Ophiogomphus anomalus* (Extra-striped Snaketail), and *Cordulegaster diastatops* (Delta-spotted Spiketail). Bogs, fens and a variety of wetlands in the immediate vicinity will produce many other species including the smallest dragonfly in the north, the Elfin Skimmer (*Nannotheimis bella*). We will be watching for *Gomphus ventricosus* (Skillet Clubtail) last seen on the Ottawa River many decades ago. On other rivers we will be looking for the first Ontario records of *Ophiogomphus howei* (Pygmy Snaketail) and *Ophiogomphus asperses* (Brook Snaketail).

On 12 July, a 2-3 day post-conference field trip will depart, probably for areas to the north. The plans will be finalized by participants just before and during the meeting. It is likely that the group will be studying diversity in particular habitats such as fens and /or rivers.

Accommodation:

The main conference facility will be the Quality Inn on 70 Madawaska Blvd (number 27 on the website “townmap” - <http://www.arnprior.ca> - click on “community” for the map). The cost of the double occupancy rooms is \$95.20 and this includes 12% taxes. Sixty rooms have been reserved for attendees (July 8-11 inclusive) but the reservations will only last until 8 May (60 day hold). Call 613-623-7991 to book a room. For more information visit the Inn’s website at www.arnpriorqualityinn.com. Attendees should confirm costs with the Inn nearer to the meeting date since there is always a possibility that the cost of accommodation will be reduced somewhat. It is also necessary to indicate your attendance at DSA in order to qualify for the reasonable deal that has already been negotiated. Alternative motel accommodation several blocks away on Daniel Street is outlined on the accompanying sheet and includes Twin Maples Motel (613-623-4271) and Arnprior Motor Inn (613-623-7906). There is also the Country Squire Motel (613-623-6556) on the edge of town near the Trans-Canada Highway. These alternatives are about \$20-30 less per night but they have fewer facilities.

Camping is available in Fitzroy Harbour Provincial Park, 10 miles NE of town (<http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/fitz-facilities.html>). Electrical sites are \$27.25, non-electrical \$23.25 (2004 rates) and showers, laundry facilities, park store and playground are available. Campsite reservations can be made up to 5 months beforehand (and reservations should be made months ahead) by calling the reservation number 1-888-668-7275. The \$12.00 reservation fee is non-refundable. For more information on the park and map, see the website.

About the DSA:

The Dragonfly Society of the Americas was organized in 1988. Membership

consists primarily of US and Canadian Odonatologists, but the DSA serves all of North, Central and South America. It is open to anyone in the world, however, who has an interest in Odonata.

Purposes of the DSA are to encourage scientific research, habitat preservation and aesthetic enjoyment of Odonata through (1) cooperation and comradeship among odonatologists worldwide; (2) fostered interchange between amateur and professional enthusiast; (3) establishment of publications to disseminate information relating to Odonata; (4) support for wetlands and habitat preservation as the most effective manner for odonate conservation; and (5) cooperation with organizations sharing common goals of environmental preservation.

For more information on DSA publications and membership consult the website <http://www.afn.org/~iori/dsaintro.html>.

Keys to the Kingdoms: a Taxonomy Institute

Heather Hamilton

Are you interested in learning more about the taxonomy, behaviour and life history of species here in Eastern Ontario?

Between April and July 2005, the Eastern Ontario Biodiversity Museum (EOBM) will offer a series of programmes which will provide a unique opportunity to delve deeper into the intimate world of local biodiversity. Taxa to be studied include: Insects (two programmes); Birds; Mammals; Lichens; Mosses, Liverworts and Ferns; Land Snails and Unionids; and Plants. Each course will be taught by local specialists, some of whom are acknowledged Canadian, or world experts. There will be specimens to examine, microscope work, audio-visual presentations, lectures, field trips and resource materials. Each programme will be two days; one day on each of two weekends. They will take place at the Biodiversity Museum in Kemptville (just $\frac{1}{2}$ hour south of Ottawa). There is a limit of 10 participants per programme, age 12 and older.

Volunteers Needed in Spring 2005 for Migration Monitoring

Peter Browne

You may be aware that there is a Bird Observatory at Innis Point, on the south shore of the Ottawa River, about 15 km west of downtown Ottawa. Its main activity is bird banding.

The observatory is one of a chain of about 20 such stations across Canada at which the Spring Migration Monitoring Program is performed. The countrywide program is organized by Bird Studies Canada. The purpose is to monitor, in a standardized way, the migration of birds on their way to breeding grounds lying to the north of populated areas, and which are therefore relatively inaccessible to direct observation. Most of the birds concerned are small song birds. The long-term plan is to use the migration monitoring data as a measure of the populations of these northern nesters. Changes in population measures are used to guide conservation and protection programs.

Every spring, for the last eight years, the observatory has concentrated on migration monitoring. This lasts for about six weeks and is designed to measure a sample of the bird migration passing through the area. It is done by both capturing birds in mist nets and observing them.

Innis Point is looking for volunteers to help in this program in Spring 2005. The program runs seven days a week and usually has plenty of personnel during the weekends, but not enough Monday to Friday. It will take place during the period April 24 to June 7. Each day's activities last from about 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Rides can probably be arranged.

Volunteers are needed especially to extract birds from mist nets and to identify and count birds in or passing over the area. Training in the extraction process will be given. There is also the possibility of being trained in bird banding, which includes measuring, weighing, aging, and sexing birds as well as putting on bands.

If you would like more information, or want to volunteer for any days during that period, please contact me at (613) 745-1303 or at pbrowne@cyberus.ca as soon as possible.

Going! Going! Gone!

Ian Flann

Point Pelee is considered a birding Mecca, and Long Point is not far behind. My first big day of birding was at Long Point on May 24, 1950. I have since visited Pelee many times in May. My 2004 trip was sad, and fewer birds each year. Since 1950 pre-dates most current birders, I felt a need to document what has happened during the intervening period. In this note I am excluding rare major reverse migrations, and fall downs due to severe weather fronts as well as the Long Point report for 1960-1990 showing only a small decline in the number of birds passing through.

Before reading my report and thinking that it is a gross exaggeration, let me give you a couple of examples. First, remember the cod. In 1850 if a coastal fisherman wanted cod for dinner, he simply rowed out a few feet from shore, lowered a basket, and hoisted the basket up as the cod swam over it. Now it is illegal for a fisherman to throw a baited hook into the water. In the late 1980s federal fisheries personnel began to sound the alarm bells about cod populations, but there was no change in cod quotas. Finally a moratorium was proclaimed in 1992, but the stocks continued to decline. In 2003, only 15 years after the first alarm, the cod fishery was closed in most areas.

Here is another observation. In 1977 I went to Barbados for the first time. Snorkelling only 75 feet from the St. James coast, I saw dazzlingly beautiful tropical fish by the thousands swimming among the corals. The constantly changing rainbow of brilliant colours was an exciting, incredible sight. The fish ranging from 3 to 30 inches long could be easily touched by reaching out. In 1996 I returned to the same spot. Now everything was covered with grey-green slime and only the odd small fish was swimming around. Pollution, boat traffic (primarily water skiing close to the coral) and possibly other factors have converted this paradise into a hell in just 19 years.

Now let me relate my observations concerning the birds. On May 24, 1950 I was a forestry student stationed in Courtland, 40 km NW of Long Point. One day I borrowed the government jeep and headed for Long Point. Halfway there I saw two birders running back and forth along the edge of the road so I stopped and joined

them. There was a swarm of warblers in a long patch of low shrubbery beside the road and they showed me the Brewster Warbler they had just spotted. We saw thousands of warblers buzzing around like a swarm of insects within 15-30 feet of the road. The highlight of the day was the Long Point lighthouse. The narrow road which led to the lighthouse ended at a traffic circle and in the middle of the circle was a small willow tree about 20 feet high and 30 feet wide. Among the emerging willow leaves were hundreds and hundreds of warblers flying through the branches like a swarm of gnats on a summer evening. We counted 21 species; the only common species not seen were Canada Warblers and Northern Water Thrushes. I saw more individuals in two minutes during this visit than I saw during my entire five day visit to Pelee in May 2004.

The last time I saw a swarm of warblers was at the end of a Club visit to Pelee about 1989. We lunched near the entrance to Rondeau Provincial Park and were scheduled to leave at 1:00 p.m. Just as we were finishing, a few eager individuals had gone over to the trees and shrubs. Then we saw them waving wildly and could hear them yelling. A swarm of warblers and vireos had suddenly descended. There were birds everywhere and it was hard to know where to look next. Although this swarm was not as large and was more dispersed than the one I saw in 1950, it was a spectacular sight. Colin Gaskell, our trip manager, also remembers this incident well. Unfortunately we had to tear ourselves away and head for Ottawa.

Next May I hope to visit Prince Edward County for the first time. Since Point Pelee is not the way I once experienced it, I will probably not return.

Camping in Point Pelee National Park

Fenja Brodo

The Club's bi-annual excursion to Point Pelee has added another option to the accommodations. It may be possible to camp in Point Pelee National Park to hear the night life and to wake up for the dawn chorus during our May excursion. If there is anyone who are planning on taking our trip and would like to sleep under the stars, then this may be what your choice of accommodation.

The cost would be \$10 per camper each night and a minimum of eight campers are needed before any arrangements are made. Reservations must be made in January so if interested, call Jeff Skevington (832-1970) as soon as possible.

Wild Bird Care Centre

Eve Ticknor

I was at the Wild Bird Care Centre (WBCC) in the middle of the Falcon Watch, near the end of June, with a female Merlin. She had been chased into a window by Connor, our adult Peregrine Falcon, and was found laying on her back on the sidewalk. I brought her to the centre, but the chance of recovery was very slight. It was touch and go for awhile. However, thanks to the staff, she made a complete recovery and was released several days later.

This is but one example of the wonderful things that happen at this unobtrusive place just along the trail from the Stony Swamp parking lot. I have found that not all those walking along that trail have any idea what happens in that little brown building. Amazing! You should go there. The Public is welcome every afternoon, 364 days a week.

The WBCC is so much more than a building. As the whole is the sum of its parts, so is this place. It is a unique combination of birds and people. It is "for the birds." The WBCC is more than a depot for injured and orphaned birds. It is a registered charitable organization, an educational facility, an advocate, a hospital, a safe haven, and a home. It is Kathy Nihei's dream. The staff educate us about health matters concerning birds and ourselves, as well as educating children who will inherit our world from us. They care for, and rehabilitate, many birds including rare ones and species at risk who would otherwise die. The staff makeup includes students on placement and volunteers of all kinds.

Life and death struggles happen daily, and, with the help of the staff, life often wins out, and when it doesn't, death comes with dignity and never alone. An eagle was brought in one day and Kathy Nihei fought for her life, staying with her all night. Unfortunately the eagle died, with Kathy holding her. Should we be so lucky... Both Kathy and Steve Hamlyn and their staff have shown the utmost patience and compassion in the care of frightened birds. Well, not all have been frightened. A young Gannet comes to mind. He seemed to prefer walking about the office while a flight on Air Canada to Nova Scotia was arranged for him! On another of my many visits to the Centre I almost literally ran into a young swan taking a stroll around the building, followed by an emerald green Mallard... .

There have been times when Kathy and I seemed to be associated with cold and snow. Once she and I spent hours under white sheets in the snow, trying to capture (unsuccessfully) a Great Blue Heron at a storm water pond in the South Merivale Business Park. Another time, we were both in leaky chest waders in the middle of a creek at night, erecting a trap for an elusive flamingo! I have found myself knocking on bait shop doors for fish for baby herons, and arriving at the Centre with both the fish and cookies for the staff and Mojo, the Centre's mascot.

This Centre had been growing since its founding in 1981 with one Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Now an average of 4,000 birds pass through its doors. Imagine—over 65,000 birds have been released in all this time! Some of these have been orphaned babies in the spring, either raised at the Centre, or fostered out to wonderful volunteers such as Elizabeth Le Geyt. Others have been healed and released back where they were rescued from, or into safer places. Waterfowl have found a home on a farm, raptors sometimes are sent to Kay Keever's in Vineland for rehabilitation. Very few have stayed to become ambassadors, such as the albino American Robin who had lived there for several years in a large cage with other birds who are overwintering, waiting for spring to be released.

And, how do they keep going? Municipal funding has been cut off and the future looks bleak. However Kathy has no intention of closing down. She will take whatever measures are necessary to keep on helping these birds who will die without her help. She knows that what happens to birds affects our own lives, and chooses to speak out for those without voices.

It would be wonderful if we could help, too, so the wonderful caring people who keep the Wild Bird Care Centre going can get on with the care of birds, which ultimately might mean the care of our environment. Think of a gift in a loved one's name, or a bequest in a will, or even regular withdrawals from your account. Perhaps some of you have corporate contacts who might like to join with others to set up collective ongoing funding. Just think what a difference we could make!

The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Year Four (2004): News from Region 24 - Ottawa

Christine Hanrahan

Introduction

The fifth and final year of the breeding bird atlas has arrived and with it our last chance to take part in this remarkable project. Across Ontario, thousands of volunteers have put in tens of thousands of hours gathering data about breeding birds which in turn will help with developing intelligent conservation measures for the avifauna of this province.

Region 24 Information

Region 24 consists of 86 squares measuring 10 km X 10 km in size, except for those along the Ottawa river which are smaller (partial squares, 50% or less in size compared to a regular square). Our region encompasses extensive mixed forests in the west, woodlots and agricultural areas in the east, interspersed with rivers, lakes, wetlands, and urban spaces. It is an unusually diverse area, reflected in the variety of birds found.

Volunteers

Without the volunteers who contribute their time and expertise, this project couldn't succeed. During 2004 atlassers were unbelievably busy and their efforts are apparent in the significant increase in data. Not only have species totals gone up for most squares, but so has the number of confirmed breeding records. Thanks to all these dedicated folk, our region is doing extraordinarily well.

Atlassing Results - 2004

Breeding evidence has now been found for 183 species, with confirmed breeding for 157 species (*Table 1*). This is an increase of six species over the 177 species of the first atlas (1981-1985). Please remember that the data given here is subject to change.

Our criteria for considering a square complete is a minimum of 90 species per square west of Ottawa, and 80 species east of the city, with 30 species confirmed breeding per square. Partial squares are considered complete if they match or come close to

figures set by the last atlas (*Table 2*).

Using this set of criteria:

- 76 squares are considered complete.
- 4 squares need work on both total species and confirmations.
- 6 squares need more confirmations only.

Thirty-nine squares have over 100 species. The highest total for a square is 125 species in VR52 Ramsayville followed by 124 species in UR80, Tatlock. Many squares have exceeded the minimum requirement of 30 species with breeding confirmed. Top honour goes to VR52 Ramsayville with 89 species confirmed breeding, followed by VR20 Munster with 78 species. Many other squares have over 50 species confirmed, which, significantly, is much closer to Mike Cadman's suggestion of 50% confirmation rate per square. See Table 1 for a complete listing.

New Species

The Common Goldeneye was recorded on 18UR90 as a possible breeder. This is the first breeding record for this region. Another report of a nesting Common Goldeneye in VR71 came in too late to verify this year, but the observation will be followed up in 2005. During the last atlas only one of the six eastern regions reported the species (Region 26, Pembroke). This time every region is showing records for the Common Goldeneye, with a total of 19 squares in six regions reporting. This is another cavity nesting duck, typically found during breeding season on small ponds or lakes. Keep your eyes open during nesting season for this species in 2005, particularly if your square encompasses small ponds in wooded areas.

The Brewster's Warbler, a hybrid between Golden-winged Warbler and Blue-winged Warbler, was recorded with fledged young on VR12. Because hybrids can give the song of either parent, the atlas decided that song alone was not an accurate enough indicator to name the species unless the bird was also seen, hence the designation on the data card of "Blue/Golden-winged Warbler." Not surprisingly, neither Golden-winged or Blue-winged Warblers are common in our region, with only six squares reporting Golden-winged Warblers, none reporting Blue-Winged Warblers, and three recording "Golden/Blue-winged species."

The Palm Warbler is a species with specific habitat conditions. As noted in the last atlas (1987) "the critical habitat components seem to be openings with sphagnum moss and shrub cover adjacent to spruce or tamarack." This type of habitat is scarce in eastern Ontario, but both Mer Bleue and Alfred Bog supply appropriate habitat. Little surprise then, that if the species was going to breed it would do so in either or both of these places. In our region, a family of fledged young was recorded in the

Mer Bleue Bog (VR62), while in Region 23 two squares, both encompassing the Alfred Bog, also reported the Palm Warbler. During the last atlas, this species was recorded as a “probable” breeder in Mer Bleue. The 2004 record constitutes an important and exciting find!

More News:

Cape May Warbler: It is no surprise that a number of species have increased or decreased both in population and in range since the first atlas was published in 1987. One of the more interesting examples of a range extension is that of the Cape May Warbler. During the first atlas the closest this species came to our region was the Pembroke region. Despite considerable suitable habitat, there were no records for our region, and the species

was generally considered to be a more northerly breeder. Dan Welsh, however, in his account of the species for the first atlas (1987) commented that the scarcity of records from the Ottawa area “*is surprising.*” Things have changed considerably, and we now have 16 squares reporting Cape May Warblers, two with confirmed breeding evidence. Records come from both east and west of the region, with three separate pairs located in Larose Forest near Bourget.

The Bay-breasted Warbler is another species showing a marginal increase in the number of squares this atlas (three compared to one). The slight increase is apparent in adjoining regions where this species is also slightly more common than last time.

Sandhill Cranes: Once again this species was recorded breeding in the Mer Bleue Bog (VR62) (please see *T&L*, 38(1):28 for more information). Interestingly, reports of Sandhill Cranes increased significantly in 2004 with a second breeding record of fledged young from UR57 (Westmeath). In addition, seven other squares reported this species as either possible or probable breeders.

Region 24 Atlas Trivia:

- Species on every square (86/86): Mourning Dove, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Robin, and Cedar Waxwing.
- Species confirmed on the most squares: American Robin (83/86).
- Most recorded flycatchers (85/86): Eastern Phoebe and Great Crested Flycatcher.
- Most recorded swallows (83/86): Tree Swallow and Barn Swallow.
- Most recorded warblers (85/86): Ovenbird and Common Yellowthroat.
- Most recorded sparrows (84/86): Chipping Sparrow and Song Sparrow.
- All the blackbird species found in our region were recorded on more than 80 squares.

Other species showing increases: Not surprisingly, the trends made apparent in the first year of this atlas (2001), have carried on. Wild Turkeys, Turkey Vultures, Merlins, Northern Cardinals and House Finches continue to be reported on a significant proportion of squares compared to last time. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is another species which, interestingly, has spread into the more agricultural areas of the region, occupying the scattered small woodlots. A comparison of the species maps for the last atlas and the present one show a very large white hole in the middle of the region where no sapsuckers were recorded. Data thus far show them present on 82 out of 86 squares.

Declining species: In the fall of 2004, Denis Lepage of Bird Studies Canada, compared species found in the first atlas with the species found, to that date, in the second. He drew up a quick chart of the top 20 declines (and the top 20 increases). While no interpretation was offered for this preliminary data, his results are

interesting. Declines we have noted in our

region are supported by his chart, including: Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Bank Swallow, Blue-winged Teal, Red-headed Woodpecker and Purple Martin. Interestingly, his comparisons show a decline in Brown-headed Cowbirds. I would add, for our region anyway, most of the owl species. A note of caution, however, for as indicated below, we are still unsure whether this represents a true paucity of owls or a lack of time spent looking for them.



Screech Owl. Photo by Dale Crook

More News and Views from 2004

Helping Out

During 2004 we needed help with point counts, owling, confirmations, covering relinquished squares, assisting other atlassers, and helping with the five Perth squares. I'm happy to say that offers of help were forthcoming from many wonderful volunteers who said, in essence, "tell me where you want me to go and I'll go!" These outstanding efforts meant we have achieved many of our goals, leaving

us the luxury of focusing efforts on specific areas in 2005. Kudos to Tim Allison, Ted Baldwin, Erica Dunn, Peter Fuller, Mark Gawn, Stephen Gawn, Carol and Alan German, Jim Gillick, Paul Jones, Rick Killeen, Bernie Ladouceur, Dick Mabee, Mick Panesar, Bev Peterkin, Jack Romanow, Paul Schoening, Langis Sirois, Jeff Skevington, Eve Ticknor, and Kim Zbitnew, and of course to every single atlasser who participated in 2004.

Workshops, etc.

Mike Cadman and Nicole Kopysh visited Ottawa on April 10 to host another of their popular atlas workshops at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. There was a full house with people from Regions 22, 23, 24 and 25 attending.

“Owl Square Bashes” were held each weekend in April. Unfortunately, despite often good weather conditions, owls were in short supply. Many thanks, however, to Mick Panesar, Paul Jones, Mark Gawn and Bernie Ladouceur for leading these excursions. In November 2004, we organized owl outings to look for Eastern Screech Owl. Thanks to Jeff Skevington for once again agreeing to lead some of the excursions, and to all the others who offered to help out. Results of these owling trips won’t be available in time for this article. Instead, please check out the atlas pages at www.ofnc.ca for a full report.

Forward to 2005

Group Effort

With our very last chance to look for atlas data, we are suggesting a different approach for this final year. While we encourage atlassers to continue working in their squares, particularly if the confirmation rate is less than the minimum 30 species, or the total is less than our criteria (see above), we’d also like atlassers to treat Region 24 as if it was one big square. More eyes and ears equal more data and that can only add to the common good of our region and the atlas as a whole. We also urge other birders to help out in the last year. There is still much that can be done. In particular, we want to focus on specific groups of birds, as below, and on point counts.

Point Counts

Point counts are important for providing data on abundance levels for species. While finding breeding evidence is extremely important, determining abundance is crucial if we are to understand bird populations. They are a simple and fun way to gather this abundance data. If you haven’t done any in your square, please consider doing so. We are also looking for volunteers willing to go into squares and complete point counts where the atlasser has indicated a need for assistance. Region 24 is required to complete point counts on 50%, or 43 of our 86 squares, with a minimum of 25 point counts in a square. However, those squares having less than 5% land mass are considered complete with fewer point counts. To date, in 36 squares the required

number of point counts have been completed. In a further 25 some point counts have been completed, and of those, 14 need fewer than 10 additional point counts to be considered complete. As can be seen, we are almost there. If you would like to focus attention on this aspect of atlassing in 2005, we'd be delighted.

I realize that many find point counts daunting, but they aren't. As long as birds can be identified by song as well as sight, point counts are simple. It is easy enough to knock off 15 or 20 in a morning in squares with good road access. Furthermore, many birds are picked up through point counts that are not otherwise found. For example, I had my first, and only, Indigo Bunting in VR82 while doing point counts. Each stop is slightly different with some yielding only two or three species, others seven or more, and each with varying numbers per stop. Understanding how widespread, or not, a species is on a particular square can also be very compelling.

Table 2 displays the number of point counts completed per square.

Nocturnal and Crepuscular Birds

As we did last year, efforts will again concentrate on owls and crepuscular species such as Whip-poor-wills, Common Nighthawks, and American Woodcocks. Owls, as many of you now know, have been relatively scarce, especially when compared with the first atlas. We really need to determine whether this is a true reflection of the status of owls (particularly in our region) a reflection of lack of effort, or just sheer bad luck on the nights we go owling.

Helping Out in Other Regions

In 2004 we assumed responsibility for five squares from Region 25, Perth (18UQ68, 18UQ69, 18UQ87, 18UQ88, and 18UQ99). All have received good coverage thanks to Ken, Ruth and Tim Allison, Mark Gawn, Jim Gillick, Paul Jones, Dick Mabee, Mick Panesar, and Cameron Sangster.

However, some of the adjacent regions still need help. This is an excellent opportunity to explore some new and exciting territory where the habitat in many cases, is quite different from the one you are used to. One of volunteers who atlassed in Region 25 said "*At last! Birds!!*" Mind you, he'd been atlassing primarily in the "cornbelt." Nonetheless, his point is well taken. The richness of regions west of us can be astonishing and correspondingly satisfying to atlas. If you are interested, please contact me in early spring.

Region 25 Squares - Stats		
Square	Total	Conf.
18UQ68	69	15
18UQ69	85	30
18UQ87	98	55
18UQ88	101	44
18UQ99	103	42

Final Atlas Meeting with Mike and Nicole

The final meeting of the atlas project with Mike Cadman and Nicole Kopysh, will take place at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden on Saturday, April 2, 2005. Watch the local online atlas pages for more details closer to the time.

If You Want to get Involved:

We still need you! Help out by joining us in looking for owls, participating in point counts, focussing on finding confirmed breeding evidence, or going out on a one-time only birding trip (we'll let you know the areas we need covered and the best time to go and supply you with as much information as you want or need).

More Information can be obtained by contacting me at vanessa@magma.ca, and by checking the local atlas web pages on the OFNC site <http://home.achilles.net/ofnc/bbatlas.html> and the main atlas web site: www.birdsontario.org. The toll-free atlas number is 1-866-900-7100.

Acknowledgments: As always we are supremely grateful to the volunteers who devoted so much time and energy to the atlas again in 2004. Without a doubt, the project would fail without them. Thank You! Much appreciation to my Atlas Committee, Mark Gawn, Paul Jones, and Mick Panesar because it would be very difficult (and nowhere near as much fun) without them. Special thanks to Dale Crook for his great photo.

Atlas Volunteers 2003

Ken Allison, Tim Allison, Ruth Allison, Ted Baldwin, Ron Bedford, Gord Belyea, Cliff Bennett, Lynda Bennett, Marg Benson, Ludmilla Borshevsky, David Britton, Richard Brouillet, Peter Browne, Gerhard Bruins, Emily Burton, Janet Castle, Dale Crook, Ron Curtis, Erica Dunn, Charles Francis, Peter Fuller, Anne-Marie Fyfe, Marcel Gahbauer, Colin Gaskell, Jessica Gawn, Mark Gawn, Stephen Gawn, Carol and Alan German, Jim Gillick, Al Graham, Marc Gravel, Christine Hanrahan, Mark Hovorka, Roy John, Paul Jones, Michael Kahn, Anthony Keith, Rick Killeen, Maryanne Koot, Bernie Ladouceur, Sandy Lang, Marc Latremouille, Rob Lee, Dick Mabee, MacNamara Field Naturalists, Paul and Michelle Martin, Bev McBride, Joy and Ralph McGiffin, Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists, Dave Moore, Mick Panesar, Bev Peterkin, Eric Ridgen, Jack Romanow, Cameron Sangster, Paul Schoening, Arnie Simpson, Dan and Chris Simpson, Langis Sirois, Dave Smythe, Daniel St.-Hilaire, Blair Stevens, Austin Taverner, Eve Ticknor, Sloane Watters, Laurie L. Wood, Kim Zbitnew, Eleanor Zurbrigg.

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Hanrahan, Christine. 2004. The Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Year Three (2003): News from Region 24. *T&L* 38(1):24-46.

OFNC



PLACE: St. Basil's Church
Enter from Maitland Avenue (east side),
just north of the Queensway (a 7 minute walk).

BUS ACCESS: Take bus number 85, (which passes along Carling Avenue) and get off at Maitland Avenue. Walk south on Maitland (towards the Queensway) for 0.5km., about 7 minutes. St. Basil's is on your left (east side).

Or take bus #156, which passes along Maitland and stops near St. Basil's.

RESERVATIONS: To order tickets, fill in the Order Form and send it along with a cheque before 20 April 2005 to:

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Box 35069 Westgate P.O.
Ottawa, ON, K1Z 1A2

SOIRÉE

Wine & Cheese Party

Saturday, 30 April 2005, at 7:30 p.m.

- Selection of wines
- Non-alcoholic punch
- cheese & crackers
- Cookies & cake
- Tea, Coffee
- Fruit

Join us for some fun at our annual festive evening and mingle with fellow naturalists.

Celebrate with the honoured Winners of our Annual Awards.

All our photographers and artists are invited to exhibit their works. Prizes will be awarded to the "Peoples Choice."

Mounted pictures are preferred. Un-mounted photographs (4"x 6" minimum) are acceptable providing we can mount these temporarily onto Bristol board. Exhibits may be brought to St. Basil's between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. on the day of the Soirée and taken away at the end of the evening. If you have any questions concerning transporting these items, phone Phil Jeffreys (721-0139).

Children of OFNC members (in primary or high school) as well as members of the Macoun Field Club are invited to bring their own natural history displays. An experienced naturalist will talk to each child about their project.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

Do you expect to exhibit photographs or art? Yes No Maybe

Will your child/children be preparing an exhibit? Yes No Maybe

Tickets Required: Adult(s) @ \$10.00; Child (under 18)@ \$4.00

CHEQUE ENCLOSED FOR \$.....

Table 1: Region 24 Ottawa: Cumulative Results (2001-2004). Species in boldface are new for 2004. The numbers in all the boxes represent the number of squares the species was recorded in.

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Common Loon	9	13	11	33
Pied-billed Grebe	14	6	12	32
Horned Grebe	0	1	0	1
Double-crested Cormorant	5	0	1	6
American Bittern	32	16	10	58
Least Bittern	3	4	2	9
Great Blue Heron	28	4	13	45
Green Heron	25	13	15	53
Black-crowned Night-heron	1	1	1	3
Turkey Vulture	41	19	4	63
Canada Goose	13	12	39	64
Wood Duck	10	12	46	68
Gadwall	3	2	0	5
American Wigeon	3	3	1	7
American Black Duck	10	11	16	37
Mallard	7	22	53	81
Blue-winged Teal	11	8	13	32
Northern Shoveler	2	1	5	8
Northern Pintail	2	4	3	9
American Green-winged Teal	4	10	2	16
Redhead	0	1	0	1
Ring-necked Duck	3	3	0	6
Lesser Scaup	3	3	0	6
Common Goldeneye	1	0	0	1
Hooded Merganser	15	12	8	35
Common Merganser	3	11	7	21
Ruddy Duck	0	4	2	6
Osprey	16	5	19	40

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Bald Eagle	2	0	1	3
Northern Harrier	29	15	20	64
Sharp-shinned Hawk	27	5	11	43
Cooper's Hawk	17	0	8	25
Northern Goshawk	10	3	7	20
Red-shouldered Hawk	16	6	9	31
Broad-winged Hawk	22	10	13	45
Red-tailed Hawk	26	25	25	76
American Kestrel	21	12	38	71
Merlin	15	9	10	34
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	1	1
Gray Partridge	6	9	8	23
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	0	0	1
Ruffed Grouse	22	15	36	73
Wild Turkey	19	7	16	42
Yellow Rail	0	1	0	1
Virginia Rail	9	18	15	42
Sora	17	14	7	38
Common Moorhen	4	4	1	9
American Coot	4	2	2	8
Sandhill Crane	5	2	2	9
Killdeer	10	13	58	81
Spotted Sandpiper	18	20	30	68
Upland Sandpiper	13	14	18	45
Common Snipe	34	27	11	72
American Woodcock	34	24	8	66
Wilson's Phalarope	1	1	1	3
Ring-billed Gull	6	2	3	11
Herring Gull	2	1	0	3
Common Tern	1	5	1	7
Black Tern	3	4	5	12

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Rock Dove	13	19	47	79
Mourning Dove	3	29	54	86
Black-billed Cuckoo	40	21	9	70
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	0	0	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	19	4	3	26
Great Horned Owl	17	12	13	42
Northern Hawk-Owl	0	0	1	1
Barred Owl	14	12	4	30
Long-eared Owl	7	2	0	9
Short-eared Owl	3	3	1	7
Northern Saw-whet Owl	16	8	0	24
Common Nighthawk	10	6	1	17
Whip-poor-will	19	9	0	28
Chimney Swift	16	4	5	25
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	34	32	17	83
Belted Kingfisher	22	21	38	81
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	2	2	6
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9	10	63	82
Downy Woodpecker	18	16	50	84
Hairy Woodpecker	20	17	46	83
Black-backed Woodpecker	2	1	0	3
Northern Flicker	11	14	54	84
Pileated Woodpecker	26	26	22	74
Olive-sided Flycatcher	7	5	1	13
Eastern Wood-Pewee	25	41	18	84
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	3	2	1	6
Alder Flycatcher	26	36	14	76
Willow Flycatcher	23	10	4	37
Least Flycatcher	24	41	14	79
Eastern Phoebe	10	6	69	85
Great Crested Flycatcher	12	34	39	85
Eastern Kingbird	2	17	65	84

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Loggerhead Shrike	1	0	0	1
Yellow-throated Vireo	2	2	1	5
Blue-headed Vireo	16	16	0	32
Warbling Vireo	20	41	18	79
Philadelphia Vireo	2	1	0	3
Red-eyed Vireo	8	40	38	86
Gray Jay	0	1	0	1
Blue Jay	6	19	61	86
American Crow	8	10	67	85
Common Raven	20	17	28	65
Horned Lark	19	16	8	43
Purple Martin	12	4	25	41
Tree Swallow	7	5	72	84
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	12	4	18	34
Bank Swallow	13	5	29	47
Cliff Swallow	10	3	31	44
Barn Swallow	6	4	73	83
Black-capped Chickadee	2	7	76	85
Red-breasted Nuthatch	17	26	31	74
White-breasted Nuthatch	16	18	46	80
Brown Creeper	20	18	6	44
Carolina Wren	1	2	0	3
House Wren	17	23	31	71
Winter Wren	22	26	3	
Sedge Wren	4	10	0	14
Marsh Wren	11	14	8	33
Golden-crowned Kinglet	18	5	3	26
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	13	3	0	16
Eastern Bluebird	6	9	49	64
Veery	11	46	26	83
Swainson's Thrush	7	2	3	12

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Hermit Thrush	21	30	11	62
Wood Thrush	26	36	15	77
American Robin	2	1	83	86
Gray Catbird	11	27	44	82
Northern Mockingbird	8	5	1	14
Brown Thrasher	15	25	33	73
European Starling	4	0	80	84
Cedar Waxwing	17	29	40	86
Brewster's Warbler	0	0	1	1
Golden-winged Warbler	4	1	1	6
Golden/Blue-winged Warbler (heard)	2	1	0	3
Tennessee Warbler	0	1	0	1
Nashville Warbler	17	31	28	76
Northern Parula	0	1	0	1
Yellow Warbler	2	23	59	84
Chestnut-sided Warbler	19	28	32	79
Magnolia Warbler	33	18	11	62
Cape May Warbler	11	2	3	16
Black-throated Blue Warbler	26	15	3	44
Yellow-rumped Warbler	33	19	16	68
Black-throated Green Warbler	21	29	16	66
Blackburnian Warbler	18	9	6	33
Palm Warbler	0	0	1	1
Pine Warbler	20	24	8	53
Bay-breasted Warbler	2	0	1	3
Black-and-white Warbler	16	36	31	83
American Redstart	33	26	18	77
Ovenbird	16	36	33	85
Northern Waterthrush	19	28	14	61
Mourning Warbler	24	24	12	60
Common Yellowthroat	4	17	64	85

Species	Possible	Probable	Confirmed	Total
Canada Warbler	14	8	5	27
Scarlet Tanager	28	30	7	65
Eastern Towhee	12	3	1	16
Chipping Sparrow	3	9	72	84
Clay-coloured Sparrow	6	9	5	20
Field Sparrow	18	11	21	50
Vesper Sparrow	24	11	12	47
Savannah Sparrow	9	22	48	79
Grasshopper Sparrow	6	9	5	20
Le Conte's Sparrow	1	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	1	5	78	84
Lincoln's Sparrow	1	1	2	5
Swamp Sparrow	18	26	46	80
White-throated Sparrow	10	24	48	82
Dark-eyed Junco	20	1	0	21
Northern Cardinal	13	20	31	64
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	8	16	59	83
Indigo Bunting	22	39	14	75
Bobolink	4	34	44	82
Red-winged Blackbird	2	5	78	85
Eastern Meadowlark	15	33	33	81
Common Grackle	0	4	81	85
Brown-headed Cowbird	23	21	40	84
Baltimore Oriole	11	19	53	83
Purple Finch	23	30	16	69
House Finch	17	18	23	58
Red Crossbill	1	1	1	3
White-winged Crossbill	6	9	0	15
Pine Siskin	14	11	0	25
American Goldfinch	6	54	24	84
Evening Grosbeak	21	12	14	47
House Sparrow	3	8	65	76

Table 2: Species totals and confirmations per square. Squares and point counts in boldface are considered complete. NA refers to “not Atlassed.” See *T&L* 38(1):26 for full details.

Square Name & Number	Species total	Confirmed	Last Atlas	Point Counts
VR00 Almonte	94	32	108/49	26
VR01 Blakeney	93	47	100/41	30
VR02 Kinburn	111	33	107/54	28
VR03 Fitzroy Harbour	109	52	120/79	27
VR04 Quyon (5%)	78	21	50/4	7
VR10 Appleton	116	68	97/38	36
VR11 Corkery	114	46	106/29	29
VR12 Marathon/Carp	109	46	106/51	23
VR13 Constance Bay	90	32	116/54	1
VR14 Eardley (5%) NA	9	1	61/11	0
VR20 Munster	113	78	103/63	24
VR21 Kanata/Stittsville	102	48	119/64	25
VR22 S. March	116	63	136/82	23
VR23 Dunrobin	107	41	104/55	30
VR30 Richmond	114	72	106/56	76
VR31 Bells Corners	98	43	118/70	31
VR32 Britannia	92	43	96/54	0
VR40 Manotick	90	68	100/42	17
VR41 Uplands Airport	108	65	90/54	25
VR42 Ottawa Centre	101	58	89/54	6
VR43 Rockcliffe (50%)	65	38	58/35	19

Square Name & Number	Species total	Confirmed	Last Atlas	Point Counts
VR50 West Osgoode	98	75	100/68	58
VR51 Greely	101	64	88/39	17
VR52 Ramsayville	125	89	116/92	21
VR53 Greens Creek	98	48	101/65	26
VR60 Vernon	84	37	81/41	26
VR61 Edwards	86	35	77/33	24
VR62 Carlsbad Springs	90	51	104/61	10
VR63 Martin's Corners	93	50	94/54	25
VR64 Cumberland (5%)	59	24	57/20	0
VR70 Morewood	81	41	71/41	25
VR71 Russell	85	51	97/34	25
VR72 Vars	110	52	92/30	16
VR73 Sarsfield	97	44	90/30	21
VR74 Rockland (50%)	91	23	87/34	25
VR80 Crysler	87	36	87/39	0
VR81 Gagnon	95	40	79/31	8
VR82 Cheney	101	45	101/50	17
VR83 Bourget	108	38	86/28	26
VR84 Clarence	106	43	94/31	25
VR90 Berwick	88	30	78/26	0
VR91 Mayerville	90	34	85/63	0
VR92 Lemieux	85	36	83/25	0
VR93 Pendleton	92	32	95/42	29

Square Name & Number	Species total	Confirmed	Last Atlas	Point Counts
VR94 Jessups Falls	87	38	90/34	0
UR50 McCreary Mtn./Norcan Lake NA	86	15	95/30	24
UR51 Ferguson's Lake	94	17	109/45	81
UR52 Shamrock	97	21	101/35	29
UR53 Balsam Hill	94	32	110/56	0
UR54 Bromley	99	38	106/52	1
UR55 Cobden	110	48	105/40	26
UR56 Beachburg	102	57	95/49	0
UR57 Westmeath	102	50	95/49	0
UR58 Flannagan Bay (50%)	87	31	76/26	25
UR60 Flower Station	104	54	91/22	20
UR61 Calabogie	101	38	1118/42	25
UR62 Ashdad	105	33	107/39	32
UR63 Renfrew	106	42	109/47	20
UR64 Haley Station	86	14	101/40	17
UR65 Queensline	101	34	95/15	28
UR66 Norman Rapids	95	36	85/43	25
UR67 La Passe (50%)	85	35	73/43	23
UR68 Davidson (5%)	37	5	N/A	3
UR70 Darling Long Lake	93	25	93/22	0
UR71 Bagot Long Lake	101	38	102/26	25
UR72 Burnstown	92	40	105/51	9

Square Name & Number	Species total	Confirmed	Last Atlas	Point Counts
UR73 Goshen	99	40	102/43	39
UR74 Castleford	93	34	102/51	10
UR80 Tatlock	124	57	95/25	41
UR81 Lowney Lake	101	21	110/36	16
UR82 White Lake	108	59	112/49	25
UR83 Sand Point	109	52	105/47	0
UR84 Rhoddy's Bay 5%	64	17	51/17	6
UR90 Clayton	106	46	95/31	36
UR91 Cedar Hill	101	35	119/52	16
UR92 Pakenham	103	42	103/44	0
UR93 Arnprior	113	28	113/60	0
VQ19 Black's Corners	100	53	92/25	0
VQ29 Dwyer Hill	105	60	116/60	27
VQ39 Malakoff	124	50	115/45	0
VQ49 North Gower	100	62	101/61	0
VQ59 Osgoode	83	62	80/29	56
VQ69 Winchester Bog	80	43	79/35	0
VQ79 Winchester	87	46	86/39	0
VQ89 Chesterville	95	46	81/33	0
VQ99 Finch	98	44	N/A	0

Nature Photography Contest Update

The OFNC nature photography contest is underway. The contest is open to all Club members from September 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005.

Two prizes will be awarded for each of the six themes in both levels of participation (Junior and Adult), plus a grand prize of a digital camera package from Galaxy Camera. Remember you can enter as many times as you wish and in all six themes.

Entries must be received by September 21, 2005. Send your entries, marked "Nature Photography Contest": to:

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Box 35069, Westgate P.O.
Ottawa, ON
K1Z 1A2

or to: *sdeschenes@cyberus.ca*.

All contest rules can be found in Trail and Landscape Volume 38(4) or on the OFNC website (www.ofnc.ca).

Redpolls

Emily Burton

Easy enough to miss,
brown and white stripes against
brown and white sunflower seed carpet
until, as if at nothing,
fifty or more cherry-pink lights
flutter, chatter, erupt.

Fall Bird Sightings

1 August - 1 November 2004

Chris Lewis

Although many of us non-avians think it's still summer until 21 September, birds have other ideas. If you were a migratory bird eager to get south, the clear and cool weather in August and the warm temperatures in September and most of October were ideal. If you were a non-migratory birder eager for a "fall-out," these conditions were not the best. Even the fearsome series of hurricanes and tropical storms that slammed the Caribbean and southern USA failed to bring any major rarities. Regardless, it proved to be a very interesting season in the Ottawa-Gatineau area, especially for waterfowl and shorebirds. And it's always wise to remember, when one is tempted to complain about the weather or the birding, that winter is just around the corner.

RARITIES

An unprecedented number of **GREAT EGRETS** visited Ottawa this season, beginning with one in a quarry at Boundary Rd. and Hwy 417 on 9 August, and culminating in a grand total of six birds at Shirleys Bay from 3 September - 11 October. At least one was still present for the Fall Bird Count on 17 October—*the latest record ever for this species in Ottawa, and the first record for October.*

An adult **CATTLE EGRET** showed up on a farm (and evidently on a cow) in Scotch Corners, southwest of Carleton Place on 31 October.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were found along Milton Rd. near Carlsbad Springs on 3 and 16 October, as well as at Shirleys Bay and the large pond on the east side of Moodie Dr. south of the Trail Rd. Landfill on 16 and 28 October respectively.

A juvenile **SABINE'S GULL**, *the first Ottawa record since the late 1980s*, made a brief appearance at the Moodie Dr. pond on 5 September, and an **immature BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** was on the Ottawa River at Constance Bay on 19 October.

A **RED PHALAROPE** dropped in at the Aylmer marina (Québec) on 22 October,

but apparently was not inclined to stay.

EVENTS

The 23rd annual OFNC SEEDATHON on 5 September was again a success, with a total of 116 species found on what turned out to be a gorgeous summer-like day. The best bird was the **Sabine's Gull** (see RARITIES), but most important were the very generous pledges received from over 60 sponsors. Once again, your kind donations ensured that the OFNC feeders would be well-stocked for the winter.

The 10th annual OFNC FALL BIRD COUNT was conducted on 16-17 October. One hundred thirty six species were recorded by 54 participants. The cool temperatures, periods of rain and sometimes strong southwest winds did not dampen our spirits, and probably helped keep some of the more interesting species around for us to count.

Results of both events can be found on the OFNC web site www.ofnc.ca.

LOONS, GREBES & HERONS

A smattering of **Red-throated Loons** were spotted on the Ottawa River between Dick Bell Park and Shirleys Bay from 20 - 31 October with one continuing to patrol Lac Des Chênes for at least five days. **Horned and Red-necked Grebes** began to appear on the river in late September, but only in very small numbers through the end of October. **Great Egrets** established both record high numbers and record late dates in October, and a rare **Cattle Egret** dropped in at Scotch Corners for Halloween. It was another good year for **Green Herons**, but only two adults and one juvenile **Black-crowned Night-herons** were occasionally reported from Britannia (Mud Lake) and Shirleys Bay; one adult was still at Mud Lake on 2 October.

WATERFOWL

Several individual **Greater White-fronted Geese** were found in mid-October. Small numbers of **Snow Geese**, mainly of the Greater subspecies, were reported from various locations. A flock of approximately 100 birds on 16 October grew to 235 by the 31 October, obviously content to rest in the Moodie Dr. pond during this time.

Most of us enjoy the spectacle of the huge numbers of **Canada Geese** that stage on the Ottawa River and the local large ponds and sewage lagoons, but an interesting taxonomic change occurred in July 2004. The American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) announced that, based on DNA research, only the seven larger subspecies are now called **Canada Goose** (*Branta canadensis*), whereas the four small ones are

now Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*). Cackling Geese are very small, almost Mallard-sized, with extremely short stubby bills, but... birders beware! The differences between the subspecies within these two new species can be subtle, and careful study is required before you can safely "tick a Cackler" on your life list. A very detailed and informative treatment of this recent split, including identification hints and a range map, can be found on David Sibley's web site www.sibleyguides.com.

In addition to our common puddle ducks, bay ducks such as **Greater** and **Lesser Scaup** started increasing in early October, and individual **Redheads** were at the Moodie Dr. pond and Constance Bay on 11 and 19 October. Other diving ducks such as **Bufflehead**, **Long-tailed Duck** and **Common Goldeneye** began to appear in mid-October as well. A few impressive flocks of up to **750+** **Black** and **100 White-winged Scoters** (approximately 90% adult males) dropped in to Lac Des Chênes between Dick Bell Park and Shirleys Bay, on 28-29 October and 22 October respectively. None of these large groups remained for more than a day or two, but all three species of scoters could be found in smaller numbers on the river off Andrew Haydon Park and Shirleys Bay until the end of this reporting period. The first **Barrow's Goldeneye** of the season was spotted from Remic Rapids lookout on 31 October. A group of **38 Ruddy Ducks** were seen on several visits to the Moodie Dr. pond; interestingly, the count was almost invariably the same, 38; by 31 October, the number had dwindled to 16.

RAPTORS

Two late **Ospreys** were still at Constance Bay on 17 October, and several sightings of immature and adult **Bald Eagles** were reported this season. Hardly a fall birding day goes by in recent years without a **Bald Eagle** being spotted—a tribute to the resurgence of this magnificent species.

A very early **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen south of the International Airport on 31 August, and a few more began to appear in mid-October. No real surprise was the record high number of **10 Merlin**s found on the Fall Bird Count. Both of the juvenile female **Peregrine Falcons** hatched on the Crowne Plaza Hotel came through with flying colours (a full report on the 2004 Peregrines' progress, by Eve Ticknor, is in the October - December 2004 issue of *T&L*, Vol. 38. No. 4). **Merlins** and **Peregrines** were also frequently seen hunting at Shirleys Bay, Ottawa Beach and the Moodie Dr. pond throughout the season.

GALLINACEOUS BIRDS, RAILS & CRANES

Reports of **Gray Partridges** this season came from the Fourth Line of Osgoode (15-20 birds on 18 August), the Winchester sewage lagoons (a covey of 15 on 16 October) and McFadden Rd. near Navan (seven on 31 October). **Wild Turkeys** were a new addition to the Fall Count list, with a total of 23 birds seen in three of the four count sectors. Up to 22 **Sandhill Cranes** were found along Milton Rd. northeast of Carlsbad Springs from 17-31 October.

SHOREBIRDS

Reports from the North indicated that the breeding success of many shorebird species may have been compromised by the unusually cold temperatures and late snow on their nesting grounds. Nevertheless, some of them put on a phenomenal fall migration show in Ottawa. As the water levels of the Ottawa River dropped from early August through mid-October, many waders availed themselves of the excellent feeding habitat. *Unprecedented numbers of Baird's Sandpipers* (up to 53 on 22 August) and **White-rumped Sandpipers** (a record high of 72 on the Fall Bird Count, 16-17 October) were found this season, and several White-rumpeds continued to be seen in smaller numbers until 29 October.

Other species such as **Black-bellied**, **American Golden** and **Semipalmated Plover**, **Greater** and **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Solitary Sandpiper**, **Sanderling**, **Semipalmated**, **Least**, **Stilt** and **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Duulin**, **Short-billed** and **Long-billed Dowitcher** and **Wilson's Snipe** were well represented. Very late birds included a **Semipalmated Plover** at the Aylmer Marina on 23 October and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Shirleys Bay on the 29th.

Less common migrants included a **Whimbrel** feeding on the lawns at Remic Rapids from 30 August - 22 September, **Hudsonian Godwits** (11 briefly at Shirleys Bay on 29 August, followed by single birds at Shirleys Bay from 6-8 October, and two at Constance Bay on 17 October), **Ruddy Turnstone** (one at Ottawa Beach on 11 September), **Red Knot** (a single bird from 22-29 August), **Red-necked Phalarope** (one at Shirleys Bay on 23 August, four in the Des Chênes rapids on 1 September, and one at the Moodie Dr. pond on 4 September), and **Red Phalarope** (one at the Aylmer Marina on 22 October).

GULLS & TERNS

Not an outstanding season for larids, but not without highlights. The juvenile **Sabine's Gull** at the Moodie Dr. pond made a stellar but brief appearance on 5 September, as did the immature **Black-legged Kittiwake** at Constance Bay on 19

October. **Bonaparte's Gulls** were still being reported until mid-October; a total of 46 were found on the Fall Count. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** are obviously occurring more regularly in the region every year. The first **Iceland and Glaucous Gulls** began appearing at Shirleys Bay and Andrew Haydon Park in the third week of October.

Caspian Terns are still rare east of the Great Lakes but sporadic sightings occurred this season, mainly on the Ottawa River between Andrew Haydon Park and Britannia from 11-23 August. **Common Terns** appear to be making a comeback as a breeding species in Ottawa in recent years. Several family groups were seen on the Ottawa River through late summer, and at least 30 birds were counted at Shirleys Bay on 27 August.

OWLS & WOODPECKERS

In the wee hours before dawn on 5 September, nine **Great Horned** and two **Barred Owls** in the Munster area were stimulated by the spring-like temperatures and were very vocal. As the season progressed, some of us wondered if this would be another winter for potential pairs of **Great Horned Owls** and **Eastern Screech Owls** in the Britannia woods? Too soon for predictions at the time of this writing, but two **Great Horned Owls** (26 September) and a single **Screech Owl** (10 October) were found here. Stay tuned!

Red-headed Woodpeckers successfully raised another family in the old burn area in Constance Bay and a single adult was still present on the very late date of 28 October.

PASSERINES

Again, the weather may have been responsible for what we got and what we didn't. The cool temperatures of August and the summer-like conditions during most of September were perfect for winged critters heading south. In other words, it was a rather quiet fall for passerine sightings.

Four species of **vireos** were found on 5 September, including two **Philadelphia Vireos**. A **Carolina Wren** was seen east of Andrew Haydon Park from 15-18 August, and another was found in Constance Bay on 17 October. **Winter Wrens**, along with **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** flourished from the end of September through the second week of October. . . and then they moved on. Migrating **Veerys** and **Swainson's Thrushes** took advantage of the fair conditions, and very few were seen during the daytime hours. **Hermit Thrushes** probably did

the same later in the season, as relatively few were reported. A very late **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was found in the northeast sector on the Fall Bird Count. A **Northern Mockingbird** was heard in the Munster area near the Marlborough forest on 5 September, and **American Pipits** were first noted migrating through in mid-September.

Warbler numbers were small and scattered. Twenty species trickled through from mid-August until mid-September. A male **Golden-winged Warbler** at Shirleys Bay (a species rarely seen during fall migration in Ottawa) was one of the few highlights. Five **Orange-crowned Warblers** were at Britannia on 10 October, and the usual **Yellow-rumped warblers** could still be found later that month. Britannia also hosted a late **Indigo Bunting** on 18 September.

The lack of any significant numbers of **sparrows** was also disappointing. Several **Fox Sparrows** were reported from early to late October. **White-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrows** were present in small numbers, and a late **Grasshopper Sparrow** was found in the southeast sector on the Fall Bird Count.

Signs of the impending winter were the arrival of **Northern Shrikes**, **Bohemian Waxwings**, **American Tree Sparrows**, **Snow Buntings**, **Pine Siskins** and **Evening Grosbeaks** in the latter part of October.

Acknowledgements

The bird sightings mentioned in this article are attributed to the many appreciated reports to the Bird Status Line, as well as personal communications. Thanks to everyone who shared information.

To report local bird sightings as well as hear weekly summaries and rare bird sightings for the Ottawa area, please call (613) 860-9000 and follow the instructions. Please note that there are now new options on the Bird Status Line menu. The weekly Bird Status Line summaries are also posted on the ONTBIRDS listserve and the OFNC web site. An excellent directory to great birding sites in the National Capital region and a wealth of other information about local birding and links to other sites can be found on the OFNC web site www.ofnc.ca.

Activities at the Canadian Museum of Nature

Laura Sutin

The Canadian Museum of Nature is offering a series of lectures/workshops. The fees are \$10 or \$8 (seniors, students or museum members) for the lectures, and \$15 for the workshops. All take place at the Canadian Museum of Nature, 240 McLeod Street (at Metcalfe). In the case of the workshops, space is limited so call (613) 566-4791 to register if you intend on participating. The following is a list of the upcoming events.

Organic Lawn Care (workshop in English)

Thursday, February 3, 2005, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Gary Skillen, president of Ecological Agricultural Solutions and Energies will talk about the benefits of biological weed management and insect control for homeowners.

Community Gardening (workshop in English)

Thursday, March 10, 2005, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Laurie Anderson, Coordinator of the Ottawa Community Garden Network will give a demonstration on composting and seed planting and show you how to start a community garden.

Sustainable Lawn and Grass (workshop in French)

Thursday, April 7, 2005, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Find out about organic fertilizers and natural pest control with Catherine Podeszinski of the Association des biologistes du Québec.

Unlocking the Secrets of Longevity (Bilingual lecture)

Thursday, February 17, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Gabrielle Boulianne, a neurobiologist with Toronto's Sick Kids Hospital, will share her research on aging. Her successful experiment in extending the life span of fruit flies by 40% has contributed to scientific understanding of both the aging process and degenerative diseases such as Lou Gehrig's disease and Alzheimer's.

Sex on the Brain (lecture in English)

Thursday, March 24, 2005, 7:30 p.m.

Join Pulitzer Prize-winning author Deborah Blum as she reports on a broad range of animal and human studies dealing with aggression, nurturing behaviour, infidelity, homosexuality, hormonal drives, and sexual signals.

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,
call the Club number (722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.

REGISTERED BUS TRIPS: Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (Payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait to the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.

EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE: The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation, and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities.

BIRD STATUS LINE: Phone 860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.

**Sunday
2 January**

**24th ANNUAL DUNROBIN-BRECKENRIDGE
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

Contact coordinator Bruce Di Labio at 839-4395 or at bruce.dilabio@sympatico.ca if you are interested in participating. This is another opportunity to participate in a Christmas bird count if you were unable to attend the previous one or wish to attend both.

**Tuesday
11 January
7:00 p.m.
Review of Minutes

7:30 p.m.
Meeting**

126th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

At this meeting the Council for 2005 will be elected and a brief review of the 2004 activities and a statement of the Club's finances will be given. Following the formal portion, there will be a "Tribute to Mary Stuart" on behalf of the Macoun Club, presented by Rob Lee, Chair.

**Saturday
22 January
8:30 a.m.**

**BIRDING HOT SPOTS OF OTTAWA
JOINT OUTING WITH THE KFN**

Leaders: Chris Traynor (OFNC) and Bruce Ripley of the Kingston Field-Naturalists' Club (KFN)

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road.

The Kingston Field-Naturalists will join the OFNC to see the local specialty birds of Ottawa. This is a great opportunity to see interesting birds, meet new people, and to show our visitors Ottawa's best birding spots. Birds we hope to see are Barrow's Goldeneye, Gray Partridge, Black-backed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee and winter gulls. Dress for very cold weather and bring a lunch and hot drink.

Friday
4 February
6:45 p.m.
("snow" date:
11 February)

**OFNC EXCURSION to MUDPUPPY NIGHT in
OXFORD MILLS**
Leaders: Fred Schueler and Stephen Darbyshire
Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road.
Our destination will be Oxford Mills just below the dam at the bridge in the village near the Brigadoon Restaurant (not the Hanlan Bridge outside—west or downstream of the settlement). We shall follow the Leeds-Grenville County Road 18 south from Kemptville. Expected arrival time 8:00 p.m.

On most winter nights 20-50 Mudpuppies (*Necturus maculosus*) can be seen walking around actively in the clear shallow, often ice-covered water. The flat bedrock provides safe footing for viewing these giant aquatic salamanders. Rubber boots and a strong flashlight are recommended. Afterwards we retire to the Brigadoon Restaurant to warm up and get refreshments. Mudpuppy Night in Oxford Mills occurs every Friday through the winter and our members are welcome to go down any Friday on their own (best to check with Fred at 258-3107). This is the best Mudpuppy viewing in Ontario and also lots of fun for kids. See <http://pinicola.ca/mudpup1.htm>. For the OFNC trip, in case of questionable weather, call Stephen at 759-1389 (W) or 728-6953 (H) to confirm status of trip.

Sunday
6 February
6:30 a.m.

**OWLS, HAWKS AND EAGLES OF AMHERST
ISLAND**
JOINT OUTING WITH THE KFN
Leader: Chris Traynor and Bruce Ripley of the Kingston Field-Naturalists' Club (544-2872)
Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road.
We shall carpool down to Kingston and get the 8:30 a.m. ferry to Amherst Island, and we shall meet the KFN either at the ferry or on Amherst Island. This is a chance to see some good birds while socializing with birders from the KFN. Participants need to know that there may be a lengthy walk through the snow to get to the owl woods. Dress for very cold weather and bring a lunch.

Tuesday	OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
8 February	RARE BIRDS OF EASTERN ONTARIO
7:00 p.m.	Speaker: Bruce Di Labio
Social & Club	Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe
business	and McLeod Streets.
7:30 p.m.	Bruce will be talking about "RARE" birds that have
Speaker	occurred in eastern Ontario over the years. He will speak
	about his personal experiences with finding and looking
	for rarities in eastern Ontario; where, when and why he
	was on the lookout. Questions he will address are: What is
	a rare bird? How weather plays an important role in
	finding rarities. Over 360 species of birds are found in
	eastern Ontario, but finding a rarity is more than just a
	possibility. Birds have wings, anything is possible. This
	will be a slide presentation. This talk was originally
	scheduled for 12 October 2004.

Sunday	WINTER OUTING TO JACK PINE TRAIL
13 February	Leader: Dave Moore
9:00 a.m.	Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of
to	the parking lot. Richmond Road at Assaly Road (or at
noon	parking lot # 9 on Moodie Drive about 9:30 a.m.).
	This is an easy outing for beginners on a lovely trail that is
	maintained for walkers, even in winter. Our Club stocks a
	big bird feeder here so we should see several interesting
	species of birds as well as having the thrill of chickadees
	and nuthatches taking seeds right off our hands. There
	may be animal tracks or other signs of winter activities.
	Wear comfortable, sturdy, water-repellant shoes and bring
	sunflower seeds or unsalted peanuts, and binoculars if you
	have them.

Saturday
19 February
(“snow” date:
26 February)
9:00 a.m.

WINTER WILDLIFE TRACKING

Leader: Carolyn Callaghan and Jeff Skevington
Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road at Assaly Road (or about 9:30 a.m. at the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre, Chelsea, on Scott Road).

Join wildlife biologist Carolyn Callaghan for a day of tracking wildlife in Gatineau Park. Learn how to identify tracks of wildlife such as fisher, marten, deer, and . . . if we are lucky, wolves. Carolyn studied the ecology of wolves and other wildlife for 10 years in the Rocky Mountains. This will be a full day outing. Dress for the cold weather. Wear several layers to increase comfort while moving and standing still. Travel will be via snowshoe. Snowshoe rentals are available at the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre (\$15/day, adults; \$10/day, kids) or through Bustukah Outdoor Gear, Trail Head or Mountain Equipment Co-Op in Westboro). Bring a lunch, snacks, and a hot beverage. Children are welcome. Please register at the Club number (722-3050). This trip will be postponed to February 26th if snow conditions are poor on February 19th.

Sunday
6 March
9:00 a.m.

EAGLES OF EARDLEY

Leaders: Bob Bracken and Christina Lewis
Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd.

This will be an outing of approximately 4 - 5 hours, to search for raptors, particularly Bald Eagles (and, with some luck, Golden Eagles) as well as other birds that may be found in late winter/early spring along the Eardley escarpment, a very picturesque area of the Gatineau Hills. Participants should be aware that the drive from Ottawa to the Eardley-Masham Rd. takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes. Please bring along a hot drink, food of your choice, and appropriate clothing for whatever weather is forecast for this date.

**Tuesday
8 March
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business**

**7:30 p.m
Speaker**

**OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
THE ART OF OBSERVING NATURE**
Speaker: Tony Beck
**Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe
and McLeod Streets.**
No matter where we go, much natural beauty surrounds us. However, our senses are not always open to its presence. Through the viewfinder, through binoculars, or even with the unaided eye, we can learn to perceive the multi-layered natural phenomena that lie hidden within our proximity. This entertaining and informative slide presentation will have Tony demonstrate various techniques on how to observe and enjoy nature. Tony Beck is one of the judges for the OFNC's Nature Photography Contest for members (running Sept 1, 04 - Aug 31, 05) and we hope his talk will inspire you to enter many wonderful photos from all seasons. See the Club web site for contest details.

**Saturday
26 March
1:30 p.m.
to
4:30 p.m.**

WOODCUT DEMONSTRATION AND WORKSHOP
Teacher/ artist: John Topelko
Meet: Fletcher Wildlife Garden
A lovely, and different way to capture a subject is to create a woodcut and then one can make prints from the wood block. The basic procedure is quite simple and easy to learn, especially under the tutelage of John Topelko, a retired art teacher and accomplished artist. John will demonstrate the technique and then provide pieces of wood for participants to try their hand at this ancient and lovely art. Please bring your own sharp-pointed exacto knife for making your wood cut. Call John at 225-8339 if you need more information. This workshop is open to the first 15 people who register by calling the Club number (722-3050).

Sunday
10 April
9:00 a.m.
to
12:30 p.m.

WINTER PLANTS

Leader: Albert Dugal

Meet : Giant Tiger parking lot, northeast corner of Blossom Park Shopping Centre, west side of Banks St., 2.2 km past Hunt Club Road. The last street before the shopping centre is Queensdale St.

This will be an excellent opportunity to identify trees and shrubs when the leaves are no longer available. We will explore the huge variety of trees, some over 200 years old, in the NCC-owned Mediola woods (Emerald Woods) and surrounding fields. The outing is limited to the first 20 people to register with the Club number (722-3050) by April 4.

Tuesday
12 April
7:00 p.m.
Social & Club
business

7:30 p.m.
Speaker

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

SEX AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE: problems of upset reproduction and development in fish and frogs exposed to hormone-mimicking pollution.

Speaker: Dr. Vance Trudeau

Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

There is widespread contamination of waterways with industrial chemicals and also pharmaceuticals from sewage effluents that are causing problems for wildlife. The best described examples are estrogenic pollutants that alter sexual development in fish and frogs. In this talk, Dr. Trudeau will outline the general biology of reproductive and developmental hormones, discuss the scope of the contamination problem, and effects researchers are finding. These are not isolated studies or events, but a serious problem, often referred to as "endocrine disruption."

**Sunday
24 April
9:00 a.m.**

SPRING AT CONSTANCE BAY

Leader: Jeff Skevington and Phil Jeffreys

Meet: Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Rd. at Assaly Rd.)

Phil will meet participants at Lincoln Fields to car pool out to Constance Bay (30 minutes west of town), or call Jeff (832-1970) for the more westerly meeting place. On this half-day trip we will focus on birds but we shall enjoy anything that gives us a hint that spring is on its way. We shall explore the waterfront and some of the trails.

Waterfowl, raptors and a good variety of early spring passerines should be on the move.

**Saturday
30 April
7:30 p.m.**

OFNC SOIRÉE

Meet: St. Basil's Church, Off Maitland, just north of the Queensway.

OFNC Council would like to invite all its members to the Club's annual celebration. The evening will begin with a social gathering where light snacks and drinks will be served. Here is chance to see Council members, some of the people you have met on the excursions, and some of the Macoun Field Club members. You will also have the opportunity to view some fine art and photographs you will be able to vote for the one you like best. The evening will continue with presentations by members of the Macoun Field Club followed by the awards ceremony honouring the winners for 2004. Instead of reading about the event in *T&L*, why not see it for yourself.

**Thursday
19 May
to
Sunday
22 May
2005**

POINTE PELEE NATIONAL PARK

The Club's bi-annual trip to Pointe Pelee and Rondeau Parks will take place during the spring bird migration. This year, the Club is organizing the entire function using its own resources. Unlike previous years, no third-party management is being used. Two of our excellent birders, Roy John and Ken Allison, will be our guides.

Point Pelee National Park is a fascinating blend of marsh, beach, fields and mature Carolinian forest located at the southernmost tip of mainland Canada. Its strategic position along the migratory corridors has led to its international reputation as perhaps the best spot in North

America to view the northern migration of birds. Hordes of naturalists arrive each spring to observe many of the more than 300 bird species (including 41 species of warblers) that have been recorded in the Park. It is possible to tally over 100 species in a single day during the peak of spring migration. Join your fellow Club members in this naturalist's paradise.

The bus (washroom equipped) will leave Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre at 6:00 a.m Thursday, May 19, arriving at the hotel in Leamington about 4:00 p.m. We leave Leamington early on Sunday and expect to be in Ottawa about 4:00 p.m.

Accommodation for three nights, will be at the Comfort Inn in Leamington. We are recommending participants share rooms to minimize cost (two persons per room). The package cost including taxes, park entrance fees and continental breakfast will be approximately \$370 per person, based on double occupancy; or \$306 per person if three share; or about \$718 for single occupancy. Packed lunches will be available at about \$6-7 on request.

Camping in the park may also be an option. See page 17 for more details.

To assist the organizers, we are asking members who are contemplating this trip to make their reservation intentions known to us as soon as possible (phone Marilyn at the Club number 722-3050). A deposit of \$50 will be required to secure your reservation (**due before 15 February 2005**) and the balance, in full, by 10 April.

DEADLINE: *Material intended for the April - June issue must be in the editor's hands by February 1, 2004. Mail your manuscripts to:*

Karen McLachlan Hamilton, 2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7

H: (613) 838-4943 email: hamilton@storm.ca.

ANY ARTICLES FOR TRAIL & LANDSCAPE?

Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations recently? Write up your thoughts and send them to Trail & Landscape. We accept email, diskettes and CDs, or submissions in traditional form- typed, written, printed or painted!

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ISSN 0041-0748



TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Published by

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and Undeliverable Copies:

Box 35069, Westgate P.O.

Ottawa, K1Z 1A2

Return postage guaranteed

Printed by
LOMOR PRINTERS LTD.